



PRESS RELEASE

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SCWA ANNOUNCES CARBON FREE WATER DELIVERY GOAL

U.N. CONFERENCE. Sonoma County Water Agency Director and County Supervisor Paul Kelley announced at the United Nations Conference on Climate Change this week that the county is working toward carbon-free water delivery by 2015. The plan would make Sonoma County one of the country's first regions to meet its aggressive greenhouse reduction goals.

The UN Conference currently underway in Bali is focused on negotiating a framework for a new global greenhouse gas emission reduction accord. The agreement would replace the Kyoto Protocol that is due to expire in 2012. More than 10,000 people from 115 countries are participating in the conference and related events.

"Almost everyone at the UN Conference is talking about goals for future programs," said Kelley. "The California people here are talking about taking action now to cut emissions." Kelley outlined a plan for a new North American Climate Initiative that would make Sonoma County the field laboratory for testing and refining techniques and technologies that cut greenhouse gas emissions and meet new regulatory requirements under California's Assembly Bill 32.

"We have our goals in place under AB 32 and we know that the basic technologies exist to more than meet those goals," said Kelley. "What we need is funding to prove the concept and develop a formula for success that can be quickly replicated in other areas nationwide."

Agency representatives at the UN Conference believe that the widespread public support for climate protection in Sonoma County and the commitments already made by the county, its cities, water agency and local business leaders make the area one of the top candidates for a project of this sort.

"Sonoma has come up with an interesting proposal that makes a lot of sense from a strategic point of view," said Dr. Robert Wilkinson, Director of the Water Policy Program at the University of California at Santa Barbara. "They have already shown that they can implement these types of programs." Wilkinson is attending the UN Conference with Kelley and Tim Anderson, the Agency's Government Affairs Coordinator.

If implemented, the county's plan would enable the Sonoma County Water Agency to supply water produced with zero carbon emissions by 2015. The Agency, currently one of the largest power users in the region, already procures nearly half of its power from renewable sources. Under the proposed program, the county would move toward 100% renewable power as well as increased use of electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. The Agency's carbon reductions could be significantly larger if cooperative carbon sequestration programs with local farmers are implemented.

"One of the side benefits of a program like this is that it could make Sonoma County an attractive location for new clean industries and entrepreneurial leaders in green tech," said Kelley. The Agency recently helped organize the Sonoma County Innovation Council aimed at positioning the county for economic success in a low carbon, limited energy era.

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Sonoma County Water Agency provides water supply, flood protection and sanitation services for portions of Sonoma and Marin counties. Visit us on the Web at www.sonomacountywater.org.